

SPEECH

OF THE

HON. MR. JUSTICE HALIBURTON, M.P.

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ON TUESDAY, THE 21ST OF APRIL, 1860,

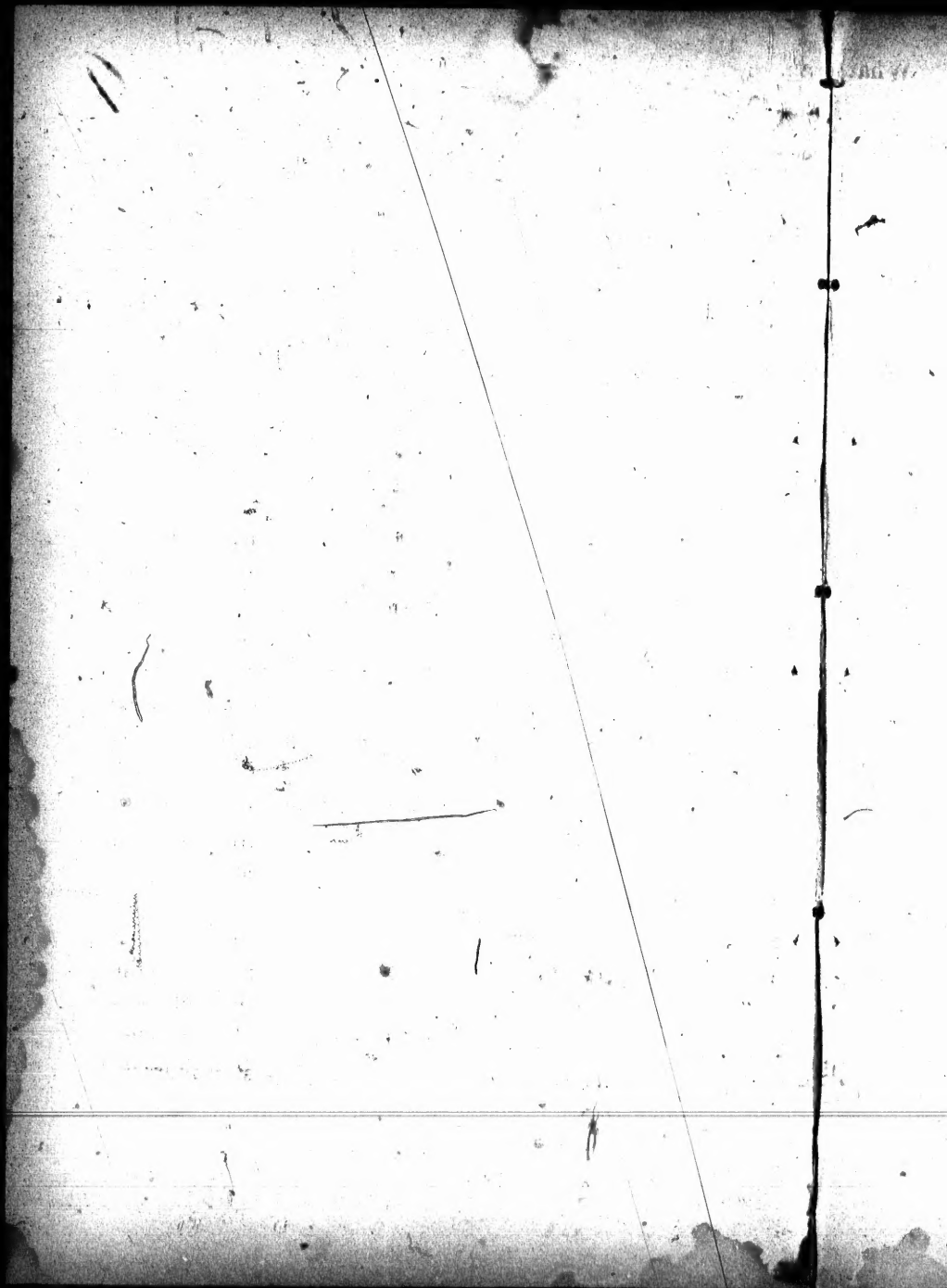
ON THE

**REPEAL OF THE DIFFERENTIAL DUTIES
ON FOREIGN AND COLONIAL WOOD.**

LONDON:

EDWARD STANFORD, 6, CHARING CROSS.

1860.



SPEECH.

WHEN the clause of the Customs Act, equalising the duties on foreign and colonial wood, was moved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Justice Haliburton rose and said he had an amendment to propose, which was of the greatest importance to the Colonies, and British North America, and especially to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, with which he was more immediately connected. But as it was near midnight, and Members were not generally aware that the subject was to be brought on at that time, he hoped that the Right Honourable Gentleman would not press the discussion in a thin House, when the supporters of Government were almost the only persons present. He must move, "that the Chairman report progress."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said he was quite certain that though the hour, quarter to twelve, might be considered late in some countries; it was, according to the usages of that House, an early hour. (Laughter.) The present was a most favourable time—

Mr. Haliburton :—Oh, yes ; a most favourable time for you. (Laughter.)

The Chancellor :—It is a most satisfactory time for the discussion of the question, the House being in a calm and temperate mood, and having nothing to sway its judgment. (Laughter.)

Mr. Haliburton :—Yes ; it will suit you very well, but under such circumstances it is useless for me to proceed. I must withdraw the amendment, and submit. (Cries of "Go on," "Proceed," &c.)

Mr. Haliburton then said, he felt that there was no other alternative left to him ; he should, therefore, not persist in his motion to report progress, but proceed at once to lay before the House the reasons upon which he had felt it his duty to move the amendment, which had just been read by the Chairman. But he assured the Committee he never rose under circumstances of such great embarrassment. He proposed to move that in page 16, line 31, of the Bill, after "sawn or split, planed or dressed," should be inserted the words "except deals, battens, and boards, which shall remain at the present duty." No person reading that short line of the Bill, and the concise exception clause, could suppose that underneath those words lay a measure of as great importance as ever was brought before the House. When he considered that the vast population of those extensive colonies in North America to be effected by this financial measure were not only wholly unrepresented in that House, but had

no recognized and official channel whatever in this country by which their wants or their wishes could be made known to the Government ; that there was not a single individual present who could possibly feel any interest in them beyond that desire to do justice which was the characteristic of all Englishmen ; and that he himself, upon whom had devolved the task of advocating their cause, was a stranger both in this country and that House, a painful feeling of isolation came over him, which he was quite certain was never before experienced by any member of that assembly. He must, therefore, crave the indulgence of the House while he stated the case of our fellow-subjects on the other side of the Atlantic. British America, as they were all well aware, was essentially a forest country, and as such its main export was the timber of that forest which covered its surface. That constituted their great staple of trade. It was that, that engaged and occupied during their long winter months, not only the floating labour of the colony, but the agricultural class, whose work was suspended at that season by the severity of a northern climate ; it gave employment also to their teams of oxen and horses in transporting the huge logs to the margin of the frozen brooks or rivers, to be ready, in the spring, for rafting to the saw-mills, to be manufactured into deals and boards for exportation. The interests of the whole people, therefore, were more or less involved in the trade, and whatever affected that,

affected also the welfare of the whole country. It was of far more importance to them, and its influence more universally felt, than that of every other branch of industry. "In this respect there was a wide difference between them and the people of England. Here, there are so many vast and various interests, if any one was ruined, it would not affect the general prosperity of the whole nation. Its influence was local and limited. Here also every class was efficiently represented in this House. The cork-cutters, the silk-weavers, the paper-makers, and others similarly situated, who were all for free trade for the rest of the world, but Protectionists for themselves—"Hear," and laughter)—were so powerfully and so ably represented, that they could make themselves heard and felt, and, as we had lately seen, could command support for their views even among some of the oldest and foremost of the advocates of free trade, who claimed exemption for their constituents from the operation of their own principles—but who was here to speak for those three millions of able, intelligent, enterprising and loyal men, who, though unrepresented, were sufficiently numerous and powerful to lay the foundation of a large empire? (Hear, hear.) If he felt discouragement at this state of things, it was not diminished by the consideration, that the measure emanated from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, one of the most eloquent, ingenious, and persuasive of men, but as he described himself the other night, the most

impervious to reason on this subject. (Laughter.) When he looked at the opposite benches, and saw a majority there who, impelled by the influence of free trade doctrines, had borne down all opposition, carried him through all the phases of his new commercial scheme, and enabled him to repeal indirect taxation, he felt the tide was running against him, and that it was hopeless for him, unaided and alone as he was, to struggle against it. Still he would appeal from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the good honest English feeling of members, who loved fair play, and who, if they could not assist, would at least sympathise with the weaker party. (Hear, hear.) In former days it was the policy of the country to nurture and foster its colonies. That was the period when the gentlemen on his side of the House were known by the well-defined and time-honoured name of Tories, and before they adopted a new nomenclature with a sliding scale, and called themselves Conservatives—Liberal, Advanced, or Progressive Conservatives, and used other aliases having but little meaning and less sense in them. In those good old times it was the habit of this country to regard its colonies with favour and affection; and he recollected in his younger days, that "Ships, colonies, and commerce," constituted a standing toast. It was, perhaps, an amplification, for colonies included and embraced the other two. Those good old days were now passed, and colonies and ships had given place to cotton-

twist and cotton yarns. New ideas and new principles had arisen. Then it was considered that it was our duty to promote the welfare and defend the territories of our distant possessions, on the principle that those who beget children and plant colonies were bound to protect and support them. Therefore every encouragement was given to that forest country to furnish supplies of timber to England, at the period when the North of Europe (the only other source from whence we could derive it) was by the machinations of the uncle of the present Emperor of the French closed against us. In this way the safety of Great Britain and the prosperity of the colonies were ensured. In 1842, Sir Robert Peel thought that the time had arrived when the people of this country ought to have the advantage of a competition between the foreigner and the colonist, and therefore reduced the differential duties on their respective productions, so as to give the consumer the benefit of a cheaper supply. Now he found no fault with the principle, but with the manner in which it was carried out. No notice was given of the reduction, as was the case now. The change was so sudden and so violent that it caused universal distress and general bankruptcy among those engaged in the trade. Large sums of money had been invested in the erection of saw mills, great outlay had been incurred in felling the timber, conveying it to the mills, manufacturing it into boards, and transporting it to the shipping depôts.

The whole trade was brought to a sudden stand still. Mill property fell in value, the price of wood land was reduced, the labourer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the shipowner, all alike suffered. One of the ablest men in Canada, whom he had seen within the last few days, calculated the loss occasioned by the abrupt passing of that Act, at three millions. The injury to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, with which he was more familiar, he estimated at two millions—making altogether five millions. This was denied by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he would take occasion presently to prove it by figures, derived from Custom House returns and other sources. He would not say the country was ruined, because you cannot ruin a young country like that. It has too much youth and vigour and enterprise to be ruined; but its prosperity was checked, its growth impeded, its trade injured, and its people impoverished and distressed. It recovered slowly, and recovered only by a larger investment of capital—by greater exertion, by increased skill, and by the aid of legislative grants designed to improve the navigation of the rivers, and to construct new roads, and also by the introduction of steam. In proportion as they began to recover from the shock, this country met the improvement by still further reductions on the duty on foreign timber, and now the competition was so great between the colonists and the Baltic shippers, that the traffic was barely able to support itself. It was in fact a gambling trade. On all ordinary occasions it



barely covered the cost of production and freight ; but when the supply in the British market, from the North of Europe was small, some little profit was realised, and that therefore was a speculation and not a legitimate trade. While things were thus situated, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had thought it a proper and appropriate time to introduce without notice his scheme for equalising the duties. It was a matter of the greatest importance, and not to be regarded in the light of a mere pecuniary affair, but as affecting the very tenure of the colonies. He entreated the House to consider whether they intended to put it out of the power of those provinces to belong to them or not. He could tell them this measure would cut the first strand of the cable which connected them with this country. When it was first announced, there were a few colonists at Liverpool, as there generally were at this season of the year, in arranging for the sale of their spring exports of lumber. The intelligence filled them with dismay. Had they received due notice, they might have had time to withdraw from the trade, but the supply for the coming year was already prepared, the timber had been cut and manufactured, and must either rot where it was, or be shipped at a certain and fearful loss. They were in the greatest perplexity. Among those merchants was a Mr. McAvity, the Mayor of the city of St. John, the capital of New Brunswick, who was completing his contracts with the merchants of Liverpool, for supplying them with deals.

He was a very respectable man, and filled an office, to which he had been elected by a very different class of persons from the "six pound" householders who were about to receive the franchise in England, although he certainly desired to cast no reflection upon the gentlemen who composed "the strikes" in this country. (Laughter.) Mr. McAvity, who to a certain extent was clothed with a representative character, addressed a letter in behalf of his countrymen to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, entreating him to afford an opportunity to the people to be affected by this measure to be heard before it should be passed into a Law. Now he (Mr. Haliburton) had read this letter most attentively, and certainly he could perceive nothing impertinent in it, or calculated to excite the ire of that high functionary. (Laughter). Private affairs, said the writer, compelled him to return immediately to his own country, but before he left England, he must express his conviction that the Right Hon. Gentleman could not be aware of the extreme injury, that the new scale of duties would inflict upon Her Majesty's subjects in New Brunswick, more especially those engaged in the manufacture and exportation of deals. He also insisted, that he and his fellow colonists who had expended large sums of money in saw mills and other requirements of the trade, upon the faith of the continuance of the present duties, had on that and other grounds, a just claim to consideration. Want of notice aggravated the difficulty, and greatly

increased the loss inflicted upon them, by this change of policy. In this country no such inconvenience could possibly be experienced, for no sooner was an intention to repeal or impose a duty even hinted at, than an intimation of it was instantly conveyed by post, by railway, or by telegraph, to the most remote parts of the kingdom. It was immediately known at John O'Groat's house, when up would rise the Member, having the honour to represent the fertile region where that celebrated house stood, and make known the opposition of the gentlemen of "Groats." (Laughter). Mr. McAvity did no more than entreat for delay. He respectfully avowed his conviction that should the proposed change be carried out without a reasonable opportunity being given to those affected by it to express their opinion upon it, "such a hasty proceeding would undoubtedly create serious discontent, among a people who had always been conspicuous for their attachment to the institutions of this country." Well, if there was anything improper in the tone of that letter, perhaps some Honourable Member would be good enough to point it out to him, for he confessed as a simple-minded Colonist he was unable to discover it (hear hear, and a laugh). Now came the Right Hon. Gentleman's answer, which he must say was not such a one, as he thought it becoming in a Chancellor of the Exchequer to make. It was very haughty, and very supercilious. The liberty the provincial mayor had taken in addressing him, seemed to amaze him.

What!! a man from New Brunswick, who could in no way influence a single vote in that House, venture to expostulate with him? What sort of a fellow was that to address a British Chancellor of the Exchequer? (Laughter.) The man must have been dumfounded at the answer he received, before he got home, if he didn't die of fright. (Renewed laughter.) In your letter, said the Chancellor, you "protest" as well as "remonstrate"—dreadful words!!—and, from this formidable commencement, one would naturally have expected that some fearful oaths or extraordinary Yankee expletives had been hurled at him, but after all he only "protested"—a thing which the Noble Secretary for Foreign Affairs has been too much blamed for not doing on the Savoy question. But the Right Hon. Gentleman appeared to have got excited by the hardihood of the man, in venturing to "protest" and "remonstrate" against any change in the Timber Duties, until the people of New Brunswick had had an opportunity of expressing their views on the subject. "Were I to examine your language critically, he said, I could not admit your right individually to protest against any legislation which Parliament may think it right to adopt for the equalization of the duties on foreign and colonial wood." (Cries of hear, hear, from the Ministerial side.) Yes, said Mr. Haliburton, you do right to say "hear," for you have a good deal more to "hear" yet (a laugh); "and when you desire to 'remonstrate' on behalf of the inhabitants of a Colony,

I must remark, that your remonstrance ought to be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies— (Here spoke the Circumlocution Officer) (a laugh)— who would exercise his discretion as to bringing it before the Minister of Finance.” That was a way of conciliating the Colonists certainly!! A mere provincial merchant had no right to use the words “protest” and “remonstrate.” They sounded highly indecent to English ears, especially if addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Emperors and Secretaries of State were alone permitted to utter them. That was the mode in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had thought proper to address the people of British North America, men in every way superior to and different from their six pound voters who hardly knew what they were talking about. A colonist, forsooth, was told that he must not presume to approach a personage like the Chancellor of the Exchequer of all England; but that he, the mayor of a pettifogging place like St. John, New Brunswick, must go back to his own country, and then address his Governor (for no communication could be received but through him), and he would forward his protest to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who would use his own discretion, whether or not he would lay it before the Minister of Finance. (Laughter.) In all probability the Secretary of State for that department never would comply with the request, because long before the Colonist could reach his home and get

through the circumlocation office, the Bill would have passed through Parliament, and he would be told, it had arrived too late.—(Hear, hear, and a laugh.) Nothing could be more intolerable than this. The Chancellor of the Exchequer then goes on to state, that he knew of no circumstance which could lead a Colonist, exercising ordinary prudence, to reckon on the permanence of a law for retaining the differential duties on timber. But surely, plain principles of justice suggested, that if their export trade was to be cut off, some little notice ought to be given them, to enable them to withdraw their capital, and seek other sources of employment. If such expectations could not be entertained by prudent men, all he could say was, that all the inhabitants of British America were equally imprudent, for most certainly they all did entertain such expectations, and did rely on the justice and the wisdom of Parliament. The Right Honourable Gentleman went on further to say, “you describe the change as destructive of the trade and the prosperity of the Colonists, if so, it can only be because the differential duty exacts from the people of England, who provide for the Military and Naval defence of New Brunswick, at their own charge, an artificial price for its produce.”—Now this would be a most ungenerous taunt if it were true, but in point of fact there was not a word of truth in it. Nothing could justify this boast,—If you do protect them, it is no more than your duty to do so. You planted the Colony, and you are

bound to defend it, and small praise would be due to you for so doing.—But unhappily you don't do it, and never did, and it is well known never will. Of all countries in the world, don't talk of defending New Brunswick! Did the English Government protect it when they sent out Lord Ashburton to settle the boundary line with the United States; who, with a full knowledge of the absurdity of the American claim, with a stroke of his pen surrendered one-third of the province, (and that portion too which included its best timber land), together with a district that in one place embraced both sides of the river, and so confused the boundary, that the settlers in the upper part of the province have to pass through American territory to reach their own capital? Not content with thus disregarding their just territorial rights, he actually gave them the privilege of a free navigation of the River St. John, and transferred to them the only safe and practical mail-route the colony had to Canada. If this is the way you protect New Brunswick, well may they say, "we can protect ourselves from our enemies, but save us from our friends." You protect the colonies! Did you protect Nova Scotia when you gave up its fisheries to the Americans? In such hot haste was this done, that when the delegates from that province (who were sent for to save appearances), arrived at Quebec, they found the Governor-General had actually signed the treaty. In this manner was sacrificed one of the noblest fisheries in the world. Ignorance and rashness were

the characteristics of the treaty, for it contained a clause enabling the Americans to land on the uncultivated shores of the Colonies, for the purpose of drying their nets and curing their fish, when in fact there is not an acre of land from the borders of Canada to the limits of the State of Maine, that is not private property; so that these foreign fishermen now claim to use any land, not enclosed or under actual cultivation, for the purposes of their fishery—but what are colonial rights when they stand in the way of a supply of cotton? In much the same way was Canada protected in the Reciprocity Treaty, which was so badly drawn up, that the clause conceding to them the navigation of Lake Michigan in the same manner as exercised by the vessels and boats of the Americans, was so loosely worded, that they have been restricted to use it only as a direct and not as a coasting trade; and by the same inconclusive language have been excluded from the use of the American canals, which was promised in return for a similar right conferred upon them to pass through those on the British side of the boundary.—Was it protection to the North-west country, when by so gross a blunder, that it would, on a competitive examination, have caused the rejection of a candidate for the commission of an ensign in a marching regiment, one-half of the beautiful territory of Oregon was given up, the settlements of the North-west Company abandoned, and a division-line established

between the United States and us, in such utter ignorance of the country, that we are now in a state of great difficulty about our title to the island of St. Juan.—Or was Newfoundland now protected from the aggressions of the French, who were quietly annexing a large portion of it to their possessions, and erecting fortifications in their neighbourhood, contrary to the express terms of the treaty. He was going to say, that if that was the protection with which they were taunted, it would be far better for colonists to be without it, but that he should leave them to say when the proper time came. But Mr. McAvity, as the Right Honourable Gentleman had observed, was about to return home. If he did so by the New York, and not the Halifax route, he would have another proof of the fostering care of England, for he would be compelled to go from thence to Canada, and then by the Grand Trunk again to enter the United States at Portland, and from thence to proceed by steamer to St. John, for there is no mail route through the provinces to Canada, and in winter the people of the upper countries had to receive their letters through the territory of the States. This inconvenience had been severely felt in time of war, and might hereafter cost us the colonies. It is to be hoped the Mayor would return a wiser man than when he left home. Here he was told you must submit to the loss of your traffic on timber. It is the result of a free-trade policy, which we have found to be a panacea for all evils. “Look

around you, and see how rich and prosperous this country has become since the adoption of Free Trade." When he arrived in the United States, he would hear another story. There he would be told, "we take all we can get, and keep what we have." Our principle is to take care of ourselves, so we live under a system of high protective duties—"Behold how we have prospered and grown wealthy under protection." The conclusion he would come to, would probably be, that neither the English nor Americans were right—that one had flourished in spite of Free Trade, and the other in spite of Protection, and that an intermediate state of reciprocity was the true policy. Finding that Mr. McAvity had been unsuccessful, another attempt was made by Mr. Rankin, an eminent merchant of great experience, to convince the Chancellor of the Exchequer of his mistake. This gentleman was well known at Glasgow and Liverpool. He had been engaged in the timber trade for thirty or forty years, having establishments in New Brunswick and also in Canada, and was considered a high authority on the subject. He (Mr. Haliburton) believed that he had withdrawn from the business, for he had too much of the prudence of his countrymen about him to continue in it after it ceased to be remunerative. He also addressed a temperate but strong remonstrance to the Right Honourable Gentleman, but with as little effect as Mr. McAvity, and received a curt reply from the Secretary, stating in the fewest pos-

sible words, that the Government could not adopt his suggestions. He (Mr. Haliburton) would not read Mr. Rankin's letter in full, it would occupy too much time, and he was anxious not to weary the Committee, but he would merely quote one passage from it, as illustrative of the depressing effect of the previous reductions of the differential duties on colonial trade, and the impetus it had given to that of the Baltic merchants.

"The differential duties, (said this gentleman), as they have stood since 1851, are much in favour of the Baltic merchants, and of this they have not failed to avail themselves, as in every remission of duty since 1842 they have on an average added at least two-thirds of it to the first cost, whilst consumers have only been *benefited* to the extent of one-third; and I have no hesitation in predicting that the reduction now proposed, if made, will share the same fate.

	Loads.
In 1840 the import of foreign wood was .	584,531
" " colonial . . .	927,050
	1,511,581

While in 1859 the import of foreign wood	
was	1,366,557
" " colonial . . .	1,248,060
	2,614,626

Finding that neither Mr. McAvity nor Mr. Rankin had made any impression on the Minister of Finance, the colonists then temporarily residing at Liverpool, drew up a Petition to Parliament on the subject, which petition was also signed by many firms of the highest respectability in that place, who were conversant with and interested in the colonial trade. It was a temperate, respectful, and remarkably well written document. They prayed the House to grant time for their countrymen to be heard in opposition to this measure, and above all not to withdraw the protection without notice, especially as colonial wood destined for the English market, from necessity must be always prepared during the preceding autumn and winter; that they now had the whole stock for the present year on hand, and the sacrifice would be most disastrous. They then set out at large, the reason why the remission of duties should not apply to "deals, boards, and the productions of their saw-mills." After they had proceeded thus far, they practically experienced, as they had often done before, how utterly helpless they were. To whom could they apply to advocate their cause? They had no representative in that House. There was no Member particularly interested in them or their trade, the Colonial Office was an imperial and not a colonial department, and was designed to carry out the policy of the Government, and not to forward the views or promote the welfare of those distant dependencies. They had

no Minister or Consul, or Charge d'Affaires, to whom they could resort in the hour of need. At last they conceived that they might have some claim upon him as a countryman, and they requested him to take charge of it for them — alas, how little they knew of the value or weight of petitions. If they had known, as he did, that the subject of the petition only was named, and that it was then bagged in that enormous sack (pointing to the huge receptacle for them) like dead game, intended for the poulterer, they would have spared themselves that trouble. Though not their Member, he was one of themselves, and he felt it his duty, however unequal to the task, to undertake it. Feeling the peculiarity of their situation, and his own inability to do them justice, he moved that those three millions of unrepresented people should be heard by their counsel at the Bar of the House. (Hear, hear, and a laugh from the Ministerial side of the House). He said he understood that ironical cheer, and it ill became those who night after night compelled him to listen to the advocates for enfranchising the rabble of England, to disregard the great claims to consideration of this vast population, who were infinitely more intelligent and able men than half of even the ten-pound voters of this country. He should be something more than a man if he did not raise his voice in behalf of his countrymen on the other side of the Atlantic, where his family had resided for nearly 150 years consecutively under

the British flag, and if they did not listen to the only advocate they could find among them, and did not regard their appeal with that respect it deserved, he could assure them it would be echoed back by throats louder and stronger than his. What was the answer he received from the Chancellor of the Exchequer?—"that such a thing was unheard of in financial matters;" but he begged leave to say there were several precedents to justify it. He would refer to one only, because that was a remarkable one. It was true that it did not run on all-fours with this (to use the phraseology of lawyers), because the tax was to be paid there and not here; but the people were heard at the Bar then, as they ought to be now, because they were unrepresented within the House. Dr. Franklin was heard at some length, and told the House then, as he (Mr. Haliburton) now warned them, that the legislation of England would cause her to lose her colonies. That gentleman spoke with a triumphant air; but he expressed the same opinion with great sorrow. Dr. Franklin's prophecy had been fulfilled. He prayed to God that his might never be accomplished. If he had reason to complain of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he must at least admit the reception the other met with, was worse. What was the language of Wedderburne, the Attorney-General of that day? He called that distinguished man, "a thief and a murderer," and said he had "forfeited the esteem of all mankind." It certainly was not a

very encouraging thing to be heard at the Bar of that House. (Hear, and a laugh.) But Dr. Franklin about that period wrote a little treatise, which he would recommend Honourable Gentlemen on the other side of the House to read, for they were travelling on the same road as their predecessors. It was entitled "Rules for making a Great Nation into a very small one." Having thus accounted for the causes which had given rise to the Petition, he would now state precisely what they did ask, and in this respect he must say their demand was very moderate and very reasonable. They had instructed him, in order to conciliate the ship-builders, to ask for no retention of duties on such articles of wood as were used in their trade. In that branch they would endeavour to compete with the Baltic merchants, and, if they could not do so, abandon the export. They also feared the opposition of the owners of saw-mills in this country, and requested him not to press for the maintenance of the differential duties on round or square timber, so as not to interfere with the interests of the British mills. But what they did ask most earnestly was a continuance of protection for deals and boards, as there was an immense capital invested in mills for manufacturing them, which this measure would utterly annihilate. There was an enormous stock now accumulated during the past autumn and winter, on the faith of the continuance of the present rate of duties, and they had great reason to complain of this sudden

and unexpected change.—It would cause very great distress. The reduction of the price in the Liverpool market would affect all the various parties to whom it had given employment. The labourer would lose the earnings of the past year—the contractors would be great sufferers, and the exporting merchants, who had furnished on credit the supplies necessary for carrying on the manufacture, would be still greater losers, for advantage would be taken of their necessities here, and the funds would be wanting for the payment of British goods, usually purchased here by the proceeds of the lumber, on which all had hitherto confidently relied. All this would naturally raise the question in North America, whether, as they had all the disadvantages of the connexion with Great Britain, and none of the advantages, it was in their power to continue it on such terms, and whether they ought not to set up for themselves and become independent—will they not say, “we are as numerous now as the Americans were when they became a separate nation. We have three millions of men of more sterling stuff than they had at the period of their revolution.—Had we not better part now, and part not as they did, but as good friends. We can then make treaties for ourselves, or we can unite with our neighbours with whom our commercial relations are so nearly allied. Why should we be placed in a worse condition than our fellow subjects in England? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had already relieved

many British interests, why are we alone to suffer? He had granted a draw-back to the paper makers, and to the holders of wine? Were the people of British America, the props and supports of this country, undeserving of a similar act of justice, for the stock of timber they had now accumulated?" He was aware that the Right Honourable Gentleman denied that the equalization of the duties would produce the effects, he had described. In his letter to Mr. McAvity, he said, "the sinister predictions of evils in 1842, as likely to follow from the measure of Sir Robert Peel, had not been realized." He would now shew that the shipping interest of the country was so seriously affected by that act, that it had not recovered at the present time, and this he would prove by Custom House returns. The number of vessels that entered the St. Lawrence from the sea in 1841, the year previous to the reduction on Foreign Timber, which vessels were chiefly engaged in the wood trade was 1458; in 1842, the number decreased to 1081; in 1843, the number was 1419; in the following year, it was nearly the same, namely 1420; but in 1848, it decreased to 1350. To take a period of ten years, that is from 1840 to 1850, the accounts would stand thus:—

The arrivals of British Ships inwards to Canada

In 1840, were 2416

In 1850 1357

Decrease in Ten Years . . . 762

The number outwards,

In 1840, was 2099

In 1850 1337

Decrease 762

To come nearer to the present time, that able, intelligent, and trustworthy gentleman, Mr. Rankin, demonstrated in his letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that from 1840 to 1850, a period of 10 years, the import of foreign wood to this country increased 134 per cent, while the increase on Colonial Timber was only 34½ per cent, and also as the duties and freight now stand, that the Baltic Timber has an advantage over that from the Colonies, of 40 per cent of the cost of production. The prime cost of the article in both countries was nearly equal, the cheap labour in the north of Europe, being compensated by the superior skill and enterprise of the Colonists, but there was, from the comparative length of their respective distances a great disparity; according to the Liverpool Telegraph Shipping List of the 3rd instant, it appeared that the freight from Gottenburg to Hull was 22s 6d, and to Dover 32s 6d, while from British North America it is from 80s to 85s per load. Deal therefore cannot be introduced here from the latter under £7. 7s 6d, but from the Baltic it can be imported at £5. 17s 6d. The act therefore of Sir Robert Peel in 1842, and the subsequent reductions that had taken place had so paralyzed the

shipping interest of the Colonies, that this sea-going trade had become stationary for years past — and it was a melancholy fact that their able, intelligent, and skilful shipmasters were seeking occupation elsewhere; some had accepted employment in the States, and others in England, and he was happy to say that they were among the most trusty and successful commanders sailing out of the Port of Liverpool, and yet this was the time selected by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to withdraw this small protection—and what was the reason he alleged for this measure? It was, forsooth, to lower the price to the consumer here? But will the reduction of duty effect that object? Far from it, so far from making this particular description of wood, namely, deals and boards, cheaper, it will enhance its price. A few London merchants who have a monopoly of the Baltic trade, after driving out of the market their own countrymen on the other side of the Atlantic, will regulate the price to suit themselves. They have already raised the price to the extent of half of the duty, and hereafter will establish their charges as they please. We know already what the combination of a few people can do who possess a monopoly, for some eight or twelve persons now establish the price of copper, and have been known to raise or lower it to the extent of ten pounds per ton, in order to exclude competition. This measure, therefore, will cause a very great loss to the revenue, and nearly ruin the

colonial shipping. As far as Nova Scotia is concerned, he could speak from personal knowledge, that it would quite extinguish this branch of their trade. The financial defect of this scheme was, perhaps, the smallest part of the mischief. It was the duty of a statesman to take a larger view of the subject. This was a maritime country, and required to maintain her supremacy on the ocean; was it wise to prostrate the mercantile marine of the third largest ship-owning country in the world, for British North America ranked in this respect next to the United States? It afforded the greatest nursery we have for seamen. He had listened night after night, to what sailors called "long yarns" about a naval reserve, a measure that had often been tried and had as often failed, and it appeared to him that those who talked about it did not know the meaning of the term. The Government were ignorant of its purport, but every merchant, and every incorporated company thoroughly understood it. They first paid their expenses and declared a dividend, and then laid aside a certain sum for contingencies, which they called a reserve fund, but a reserve implied a surplus. Now, the reason the Government failed was, they were deficient of sailors, and had no surplus of seamen from which alone a reserve could be formed, and yet the Right Hon. Gentleman was doing his best to diminish the number still further, by throwing the colonial shipping out of employment. France was acting in a very different

manner.—she gave bounties (which he did not ask England to give) to those engaged in the deep sea fisheries, and had now thirty thousand seamen on the coast of Newfoundland, which country she was quietly annexing to St. Pierre, our attention was withdrawn by an *ignis fatuus* in Savoy, which, however interesting to Europe, did not affect us in the same manner as the loss of our own territory. He did not ask for bounties, but this small protective duty might well be retained if it could sustain our colonial shipping and increase the number of our seamen, who would be our prop and stay in the hour of need. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had taunted the Mayor of St. John with our defending New Brunswick with our army and navy. Neither are required there in time of peace. A few small vessels to protect our fishermen are all that are needed, and the money thus saved would, if applied to the maintenance of the differential duty, in truth and in fact afford the best protection to the province. But (continued Mr. Haliburton) the time has now arrived to draw to a close. He had shown that the measure was impolitic and unwise, and he would now show them that it was ungenerous and unjust. In what he was about to say, in conclusion, he wished to guard himself against being misrepresented. Nothing, he said, could be more repugnant to his own feelings, nothing more unacceptable to the people whose interests he advocated, and nothing more disrespectful or dis-

tasteful to the House, than for him to accompany what he had to say with a threat, but he must remind the House, that British America had all the disadvantages of a union with this country without any of the advantages, and he implored them not to put it out of their power to continue the connexion. The inhabitants of those colonies deserved kind and paternal treatment, and were the last people in the world that ought to be trifled with. They were thoroughly attached to this country, but their loyalty had been the subject of much ridicule by those who knew little or nothing of them. It was not with them a mere boast, they had proved it over and over again by their acts of devotion. Persons of the calico school of politics, who regarded nothing but a market for cotton goods, believed, as the Hon. Member for Manchester lately said, that people would transfer their allegiance to any power that would double the value of their soil, and as the inhabitants of the United States were better customers now, than when they were colonists, it would be no great loss to us to get rid of the North American provinces. These were neither patriotic sentiments, nor were they facts. The circumstances and condition of the old and new colonies were widely different, and they were peopled by a different race. The United States were in a great measure planted originally by the discontented and rebellious Cromwellists of England. They were never well affected, and were always in

opposition to the parent State. Indeed, New England furnished her quota of regicides in the person of the Rev. Hugh Peters, who very properly expiated his offence on the gallows. The present colonies, on the contrary, were mainly settled by men who had fought and bled in the service of their sovereign. During the trying time of the revolution, British North America remained true to her allegiance, and, when the revolution was over, thousands of loyalists abandoned their homes and their property in the United States, and sought an asylum in the wilderness of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Canada, in order to have the honour and satisfaction of living and dying under the British flag. These were the men who begat the present race, and who had bequeathed their loyalty as an inheritance to their children. Nothing could be so insulting to such a people as to treat this sentiment with ridicule. In 1812 they evinced, by their noble conduct, the sincerity of their convictions. At that time, Napoleon the First, having subjugated nearly all Europe, was marching, with the greatest army the world had ever then known, upon Moscow, and it seemed as if England was on the brink of destruction. That was the occasion which the Americans thought most appropriate to join the common enemy, and accordingly declared war against their mother country. Canada was invaded at all points, and let me ask who repelled the hosts that had thus converted her peaceful territory into a battle-field?

Was it your army and navy? Of the first, you had no regiments to spare; all were wanted in a life and death struggle in Europe; and of the last, your ships on the lakes were captured for want of sailors to man them. No, it was the gallant militia of the country, aided by some few soldiers who were there at the time, just enough in number to impart discipline, who drove back the invaders, and compelled them to recross the border. These were deeds and not boasts. Again, at a later period, when French and American intrigues, combined with disloyal counsels from this country, acting on those who were of foreign extraction, and especially the Radical and Chartist emigrants from England (similar people to those deluded men whom the Honourable Member from Manchester lately congratulated, that they were going to a country where they would not have to bow to a Lord, or crouch to an aristocrat). When these combined influences induced those misguided men to raise the standard of revolt, what had then happened? Why, though the Governments of the United States and Great Britain were at peace, the arsenals of the former were thrown open and purposely left unprotected for the use of the hordes of the border population, who invaded Canada for the purposes of plunder and rapine. He would ask, who suppressed the revolt? He was proud to say it was mainly effected by the militia. He did not mean to undervalue the services of the small military force that was in the country at the time. They behaved then, as they always do, with great gal-

lantry, for wherever they are engaged they cover themselves with glory ; but in this case the conduct of the militia was above all praise. When Sir John Colborne wrote to Sir Francis Bond Head, and asked him if he could spare any of the military, he made this celebrated reply—" Take them all, I will place myself at the head of the militia and drive the rebels and Yankee sympathisers out of the country ;" and he did so most effectually. And here he must take leave to say, that that most intelligent, most popular, and constitutional Governor (by far the best that was ever sent to Canada) is a living monument of the ingratitude of this country, during every succeeding Administration, from that time to this. The people of North America, therefore, deserved an indulgent consideration from the Government of this country.

In addition to the other claims which they possessed, he ought to state that they had always shewn themselves most ready to comply with the wishes of the Home Government. As soon as they were able, they relieved this country of the expense of their local government, and had taken it upon themselves to carry it on, on a scale of munificence and liberality, which, considering their means, was almost unequalled. They paid the Governor whom England had sent out to them from the meagre treasury of a young colony, nearly double that which was received by the President of the United States. And what was the return that was made to them? On a recent occasion, when the question, what

names should be given to four different townships in Upper Canada, had been referred to the Governor for his decision, his wife had the good taste to impose upon them the names of Tiny, Floss, Opps, and Emily, these being the names of the pampered lap-dogs of a pampered master. Against their enemies colonists were able to protect themselves. He only asked protection for them against the repetition of such an insult as that he had just mentioned. The Americans, slave-holders as they were, exhibited more consideration for their negroes. Instead of naming them after their dogs, they called them Cato, Scipio, Venus, and Juno—(Laughter)—after the heroes of antiquity and the goddesses of the Heathen Mythology. Were our North American Colonists to be placed upon a lower level than the negro? (Hear, hear.) He for one should enter his indignant protest against acts so contemptuous as those to which he had referred. They had also undertaken to pay twenty thousand pounds a year towards the maintenance of their fortifications and defences, upon the express undertaking of the Governor-General, that, in consideration of the loss they had sustained by the reduction of the differential duties, and their great liberality in relieving the Home Government of its large military establishment, that they should be assisted in the formation of a railway from Quebec to Halifax, that Canada might have a winter outlet to the Atlantic, and a mail route independent of the United States. That pledge, he was grieved to say, was still unredeemed, though Canada had

honourably fulfilled her part. One of the reasons tauntingly assigned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to him (Mr. Haliburton) the other evening, for not considering the interest of the colonies, in the commercial treaty with France, was, that the colonists had imposed taxes upon the introduction of English manufactures into their country.

Now he did not stand there to apologise for this, to those who had no right to call them to account. If they had thought proper to do so, it must be recollected that they had a perfect right to impose what taxes they pleased. The theory of Government under which they lived was, that for all internal matters they were supreme; but that all external matters were within the jurisdiction of the parent state. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had known any thing about the colonies, he would have known that both there and in the United States there was a great repugnance to direct taxation. Both countries relied on the imposition of indirect taxes, and he recollected, that when he was a member of the Legislature of Nova Scotia, the people were unwilling to submit to be taxed, even for the support of common schools, notwithstanding their great desire to extend the benefit of education to the entire population. Nor must it be forgotten, that if there were high imposts in the shape of customs dues, they paid those dues themselves, and they submitted to them most willingly, because a large revenue was necessary for developing, by means of canals and railways, the resources of the country. They were imposed, not

for protection, because they had no incipient manufactures to protect, but solely for the purpose of Revenue, and they were laid upon all imports from all countries alike. But would it be believed, that that which was thus ignorantly and indignantly imputed to them, as a fault, was in fact the result of positive orders from this country. Those who presided in that precious establishment in Downing Street, that mouldering ruin the Colonial Office, not venerable but unsightly in its decay, the debris of which had choked up the thoroughfare—that institution which operated like a nightmare on the energies of the distant provinces—those guardians of that melancholy region had positively ordered, that colonial taxes should operate alike on all imports, irrespective of origin, in order that they themselves might not be embarrassed in their treaties with foreign nations.

How ungenerous was it then to impute as a sin against England, a literal compliance with official regulations. They had every reason to complain of their position and their treatment. But if they had to submit to injustice from England, they had to sustain every species of ridicule from their Republican neighbours, which was more than human nature could bear. The people of the United States said to them, "you now belong as a dependency to England, and have much the worst of the connection. You have no Member in either House of Parliament; associate yourselves with us, and your population will entitle you to ten Members in the Senate, and 140

in the House of Representatives. Instead of being encroached upon by us, and unprotected by England, you would become one of us, and united we should form the most powerful nation in the world, and no one would dare to trespass upon you. Instead of being excluded as you now are from all imperial patronage, every office from that of the President downward would be open to you and your children as an object of ambition. We have a consul in every sea-port of Great Britain, and a minister resident in London, but you have no recognized officer to protect you in any part of the kingdom. You are no where. Even the negroes of St. Domingo have their ambassador, but who is there to represent you? Why will you occupy a position so inferior and so degrading?" No longer ago than last year the Governor of the State of Maine, which borders on New Brunswick, boasted that from 1840 to 1860, the tonnage of the State had increased seven hundred per cent. This exultation was intended for their neighbours, and was deeply felt, for with larger and more numerous rivers, and a fishery unsurpassed by any in the world, they could not but dwell with pain on the mortifying fact, that by injurious legislation here, and by unwise treaty concessions to the Americans, their tonnage during the whole of that long period had been nearly stationary. These taunts, however mortifying, they had borne patiently, for they were too well acquainted with Democracy to be enameoured with its institutions.

He then warned the House, most seriously, not to put it out of the power of Colonists to continue the connexion, Self-preservation may cause them to seek safety in independence, or in annexation with their neighbours, with whom their commercial dealings were daily increasing. He (Mr. Haliburton) was not afraid, in using this language, that he should be misunderstood, for his opinions were well known. In all that he had written, and he had written much, and in all he had said, and he had addressed many assemblies in this country, his sole object had been, to unite in indissoluble bonds Great Britain and her noble North American Colonies, to combine the raw material of the new with the manufacturing skill of the old world, and so to incorporate them into one body politic, that they might grow and prosper together, possessing as they did one common language, one common literature, one blessed system of freedom, and one great and glorious flag. He was, therefore, not afraid of being misunderstood, and he would conclude by expressing an earnest hope, that the most intimate relations might for ever endure between the two countries, for he was quite certain, if properly cultivated, they would be alike profitable and honourable to both.—(Great cheers.)

THE END.

